

New AMA Study Reveals Majority of America's Physicians Still Work In Small Practices

Think the majority of physicians have gone to work for hospitals, health systems or large practices? Think again says a new AMA study released in early July ... but practice arrangements are changing.

Despite challenges posed by a changing healthcare landscape, a new updated study on physician practice arrangements by the American Medical Association (AMA) shows that most physicians provide care to patients in small practices.

“These data show that the **majority (60.7 percent) of physicians were in small practices of 10 or fewer physicians**, and that practice size changed very little between 2012 and 2014 in the face of profound structural reforms to healthcare delivery,” said AMA President-elect Andrew W. Gurman, MD.

“The AMA is committed to ensuring physicians in all practice sizes and types can thrive and offers [innovative strategies and resources](#) that address common practice challenges in the new health environment.”

While **the majority of physicians (56.8 percent) worked in practices that were wholly owned by physicians in 2014**, this majority decreased slightly from 60.1 percent in 2012.

In contrast, the share of physicians who worked directly for a hospital, or in practices that had at least some hospital ownership, increased from 29 percent in 2012 to 32.8 percent in 2014.

Other important changes in physician practice arrangements that occurred between 2012 and 2014 include:

- The share of physicians who were practice owners decreased from 53.2 percent to 50.8 percent.
- Physicians who were in solo practice decreased from 18.4 percent to 17.1 percent.
- Those directly employed by a hospital increased from 5.6 percent to 7.2 percent.
- The share of physicians who were in practices that had at least some hospital ownership increased from 23.4 percent to 25.6 percent.

The study also looks at longer term changes in practice arrangements, including a focus on the ownership patterns of men and women physicians.

To view the study, go [online](#) to the medical practice topic of the AMA's Policy Research Perspective series.

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